

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: IAEA, TECH, IMCO, SENV
SUBJECT: IAEA PROGRESS REPORT ON REVISIONS OF ITS PROVISIONAL
DEFINITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LONDON DUMPING CONVENTION

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF SUBJECT REPORT DATED JULY 18,
1977 SUBMITTED TO IMCO SECRETARIAT FOR DISTRIBUTION
TO PARTICIPANTS AT NEXT MEETING OF CONTRACTING
PARTIES IN SEPTEMBER IN LONDON.

QUOTE I. BACKGROUND
QUOTE THE CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION OF MARINE

POLLUTION BY DUMPING OF WASTES AND OTHER MATTER
(LONDON DUMPING CONVENTION) ENTRUSTED THE INTERNATIONAL
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ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA) WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF
DEFINING INNER QUOTE HIGH-LEVEL END INNER QUOTE
RADIOACTIVE WASTES OR OTHER INNER QUOTE HIGH-LEVEL END
INNER QUOTE RADIOACTIVE MATTER AS UNSUITABLE FOR

DUMPING AT SEA. THE IAEA WAS ALSO ENTRUSTED WITH THE

RESPONSIBILITY OF MAKEINGRECOMMENDATIONS WITH THE CONTRACTING PARTIES SHOULD TAKE FULLY INTO ACCOUNT IN ISSUING PERMITS FOR THE DUMPING OF RADIO-ACTIVE MATERIAL FALLING OUTSIDE THE IAEA'S DEFINITION. THE IAEA PROVISIONAL DEFINITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS WERE ENDORSED BY THE IAEA BOARD OF GOVERNORS IN

SEPTEMBER 1974 FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE LONDON DUMPING CONVENTION.

QUOTE THE PROVISIONAL DEFINITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS. WERE INTENDED ONLY TO PROVIDE A BASIS FOR ADEQUATE INTERIM CONTROL OF THE DUMPING OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL AT SEA, UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE RESULTS OF FURTHER OCEANOGRAPHIC INVESTIGATIONS BECAME AVAILABLEN

THUS PERMITTING THE FORMULATION OF REVISED AND LESS TRANSITORY DEFINITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS. FURTHER-MORE THE PROVISIONAL DEFINITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS WERE LARGELY BASED ON AN OCEANOGRAPHIC MODEL PREPARED BY WEBB AND MORLEY. THIS MODEL, HOWEVER, WAS SUFFICIENT ONLY TO ASSESS THE POSSIBLE REAIOLOGICAL CONSEQUESNCES FROM THE DUMPING OF LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTES IN THE EASTERN NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN FOR A LIMITED PERIOD OF TIME.

QUOTE AT THEIR FIRST CONSULTATIVE MEETINGIN SEVPTEMBER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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1976, THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE LONDON DUMPING CONVENTION ACCEPTED THE IAEA PROVISIONAL DEFINITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS AS OPERATIVE FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE CONVENTION. HOWEVER,. THE MEETING MADE CERTAIN COMMENTS AND REQUESTED THE IAEA TO IMPROVE FURTHER THE DEFINITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPONSE TO THESE COMMENTS (SEE PARAS. 49 AND 54 OF LDC I/16-REPORT OF THE FIRST CONSULTATIVE MEETING). ACCORDINGLY, THE IAEA HAS BEEN CARRYING OUT AN EXTENSIVE PROGRAM WHICH PRINCIPALLY RELATES TO A REVIEW OF (A) THE OCEANOGRAPHIC BASIS, AND (B) THE RADIOLOGICAL BASIS FOR IMPROVING ITS DEFINITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

QUOTE II. REVIEW OF THE OCEANOGRAPHIC BASIS

QUOTE THE IAEA CONVENED TWO CONSULTANTS' MEETINGS TO REVIEW THE OCEANOGRAPBIC BASIS OF THE PROVISIONAL DIFINITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS: ONE AT THE WOODS HOLE OCEANOGRAPHIC INSTITUTION, WOODS HOLE, MASSACHUSEETS, U.S.A., IN DECEMBER 1976, AND THE OTHER AT THE FISHERIES LABORATORY, LOWESTOFT, UNITED KINGDOM, IN FEGRUARY 1977. A WORKING PAPER PREPARED BY THE TWO CONSULTANTS' MEETINGS WAS USED AS A BASIS FOR DISCUSSIONS AT AN ADVISORY GROUP MEETING, WHICH

WAS HELD AT IAEA HEADQUARTERS, VIENNA, IN MARCH 1977,
TO REVIEW THE OCEANOGRAPHIC BASIS. THE MEETING WAS

ATTENDED BY 26 3/035TS FROM 12 COUNTRIES, AND FOUR
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

QUOTE THE ADVISORY GROUP FELT THAT THE WEBB-MORLEY
MODEL DID NOT PROPERLY REFLECT THE ACTUAL PHYSICAL
PROCESSES IN THE OCEAN, AND THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE
DOUBT ABOUT ITS USEFULNESS IN PREDICTING CONCENTRATION
LEVELS IN THE WATER, EVEN OVER A SHORT PERIOD,
ALTHOUGH THERE WAS SOME INDICATION THAT IN MOST
CASES THE ESTIMATES OBTAINED FROM THE MODEL WERE
RELATIVELY CONSERVATIVE. IN ADDITION, IT WAS POINTED
OUT THAT THE WEBB-MORLEY MODEL WAS FUNDAMENTALLY
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UNUSABLE FOR THE EVALUATION OF CONCENTRATION LEVELS
FOR PERIODS LONGER THAN A FEW HUNDRED YEARS, AND THAT
IT DID NOT EXPLICITLY ADDRESS MANY OF THE POSSIBLE
PATHWAYS FOR RADIONUCLIDES TO TRAVEL THROUGH THE
ENVIRONMENT, WHICH SOME OF THE EXPERTS FELT COULD BE
IMPORTANT. THIS LATTER CONSIDERATION ALSO REFLECTS
THE OPINION OF SOME EXPERTS THAT NO SINGLE INNER
QUOTE OCEANOGRAPHIC END INNER QUOTE MODEL CAN BE
USED TO EVALUATE ALL THE POSSIBLE OCEANOGRAPHIC
TRANSPORTS OF RADIONUCLIDES THROUGH THE MARINE

ENVIRONMENT, AND THAT ESTIMATES MUST BE MADE, BASED

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ON A VARIETY OF PHYSICAL, CHEMICAL, GEOLOGICAL
AND BIOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS, INCLUDING THE
ROLE OF SEDIMENTS. IT WAS, HOWEVER, CONSIDERED
THAT FOR THE LONG-TERM, NON-LOCAL DISPERSION OF
RADIONUCLIDES THROUGH THE WATER COLUMN THE MODEL
PRESENTED BY J. G. SHEPHERD OF THE UNITED
KINGDOM WOULD FORM A BETTER BASIS THAN THE WEBB-
MORLEY MODEL AND SHOULD BE USED
QUOTE THE ADVISORY GROUP MADE A NUMBER OF SUGGESTIONS,
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE
REVISION OF THE PROVISIONAL DEFINITION AND
RECOMMENDATIONS, INCLUDING THE BIOLOGICAL PATHWAYS
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THAT MIGHT BE CONSIDERED WHEN ESTIMATING THE
POTENTIAL TRANSFER OF RADIOACTIVITY TO MAN. IT

RECOMMENDED THAT THE ASSESSMENT OF RADIATION DOSES
TO MAN AND OF POSSIBLE DAMAGE TO THE ECOSYSTEM SHOULD
BE CARRIED OUT BY A SUITABLY CONSTITUTED GROUP OF
CONSULTANTS. IT ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT RELEASE RATE
LIMITS FOR A WIDE RANGE OF RADIONUCLIDES SHOULD BE
CALCULATED FOR VARIOUS IDENTIFIABLE OCEAN BASINS
CONTAINING POTENTIAL DISPOSAL SITES.
QUOTE III. REVIEW OF THE RADIOLOGICAL BASIS
QUOTE IN KEEPING WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
ADVISORY GROUP ON THE OCEANOGRAPHIC BASIS, THE IAEA
CONVENED LAST JUNE A CONSULTANTS' MEETING TO REVIEW
THE RADIOLOGICAL BASIS, USING THE SHEPHERD MODEL, AT
IMCO HEADQUARTERS LONDON, THUS FACILITATING CONSUL-
TATION AND COORDINATION OF WORK BETWEEN THE IAEA AND
IMCO SECRETARIATS. THE CONSULTANTS CONSIDERED
THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ADVISORY
GROUP ON THE OCEANOGRAPHIC BASIS AS THE PRIMARY

GUIDELINES WHILE ALSO TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE COMMENTS
EXPRESSED AT THE FIRST CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF THE
CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE LONDON DUMPING CONVENTION.
QUOTE AS A RESULT OF THEIR DISCUSSIONS, THE CONSULTANTS
CONCLUDED THAT THERE WERE NO INNER QUOTE HIGH-LEVEL
END INNER QUOTE RADIOACTIVE WASTES THAT WOULD BE
INTRINSICALLY UNSUITABLE FOR DUMPING AT SEA, BUT THAT
THE TOTAL QUANTITIES OF RADIOACTIVITY (RADIONUCLIDES)
DUMPED PER UNIT TIME SHOULD BE STRICTLY CONTROLLED ON

THE BASIS OF RELEASE RATE LIMITS. THEY ALSO MADE A
NUMBER OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REVISING

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TE PROVISIONAL DEFINITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS, IN
PARTICULAR AS REGARDS RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM RADIOACTIVITY
(RADIONUCLIDES) RELEASE RATES FOR A SINGLE DUMPING
SITE.

QUOTE IV. FURTHER WORK

QUOTE IN THE LIGHT OF THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
OBTAINED FROM THE ADVISORY GROUP ON THE OCEANOGRAPHIC

BASIS AND THE CONSULTANTS' MEETING ON THE RADIOLOGICAL
BASIS, THE IAEA SECRETARIAT PLANS TO SUBMIT
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A REVISION OF THE PROVISIONAL
DEFINITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO AN ADVISORY GROUP
MEETING EARLY IN 1978 FOR DISCUSSION. IF A CONSENSUS
IS REACHED AT THIS MEETING, A DRAFT OF A REVISED
DEFINITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PURPOSES OF
THE LONDON DUMPING CONVENTION, BASED ON THE RESULTS
OF THE ADVISORY GROUP MEETING, WILL BE PRESENTED TO
THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS IN JUNE 1978.

QUOTE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE BOARD OF

GOVERNORS, THE REVISED DEFINITION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
COULD SUBSEQUENTLY BE TRANSMITTED TO IMCO SECRETARIAT
WITH A VIEW TO MAKING THE TEXT THEREOF AVAILABLE IN
TIME FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE CONSULTATIVE MEETING
OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES IN SEPTEMBER
1978. END QUOTE. STONE

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